

T H E
SECRET EXPEDITION

Impartially disclos'd:

O R,

An authentick, faithful Narrative of all Occurrences that happened to the Fleet and Army commanded by

Sir E— H— and Sir J— M—,

From its first sailing to its Return to England.

W I T H

Apparent Reasons for not landing the Infantry, and many other interesting Particulars, not yet made publick.

By a COMMISSIONED OFFICER on Board the Fleet, and Graduate of the University, &c.

*Per varios Casus per tot discrimina rerum
Tendimus———VIR.*

L O N D O N:

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(Price One Shilling.)

THE
SECRET RECEPTION

Importantly observed:

As a preliminary, it should be noted that the present is the first time that the subject has been brought before the public. The subject is of great importance and the public is invited to attend the meeting on the 30th of September at 8 o'clock. The meeting will be held at the Royal Albert Hall, London. The subject is of great importance and the public is invited to attend the meeting on the 30th of September at 8 o'clock. The meeting will be held at the Royal Albert Hall, London.



T H E
S E C R E T E X P E D I T I O N
Impartially disclosed.

AS the eyes of all Europe, as well as those of our own nation, have been intent upon an expedition conducted with such profound secrecy and caution; that scarce an officer, (except Admirals and Generals) were acquainted with its destination, at least ten days after we embarked; so it may not be disagreeable to acquaint the publick of its progress; and as matters of plain truth appear most genuine, when they are neither embellished by rhetorical flourishes, nor clouded by long, tedious or laboured narratives; so shall the sequel be confined to a faithful, honest recital of facts and contingents; those who read with a finical curiosity will meet with an intended disappointment. And though these remarks were taken on board the fleet for

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private amusement, rather than intended for public perusal, yet as the minds of men seem yet in suspense, some particulars herein, may serve to set in a clearer light the whole matter, than what has already appeared.

The motives of this expedition I shall not presume to give my opinion about; but only take it from the infantry's landing in the Isle of Wight; leaving the reader to what inferences, his own reason and judgment suggest; but let him rest assured, that the plain *simplicity* of this journal bespeaks no desire of applause, unless any should *redound* from a candid relation of what daily happened, to a fleet justly looked upon as the *flower* of the British armament; and such as no nation upon earth at present but Great Britain, could send into the ocean; should I err in some terms of navigation, I flatter myself, they may be overlooked by those gentlemen bred up to this laudable and profitable Art.

July 25th, 1757, orders were received at the camp near Dorchester for three old battalions, — viz. Howard's, Wolf's, King-
ley's; to march to the Isle of Wight for embarkation; which battalions compleat both
in



in officers and folders, appeared as fine troops as could be employed in any service; on the 29th they landed from Southampton at Cowes, and came next day to camp on the forrest near Newport, on the same spot where the troops for Carthagera, and also those for General Sinclair's expedition formerly pitched; the marks of these encampments, viz. kitchens, and other appearances still remaining on the ground.

About the same time arrived seven other battalions from different camps in England, viz. Bentinck's, Amhurst's, Cornwallis's, Hume's, Loudon's, Hodgson's, and Brudenel's, and were divided into two brigades, by Lieutenant General Sir John Mordaunt, viz. Buffs, Wolfe's, Kingsley, Hodgson's, Lord Hume's, under Major General Conway; and Lord Bentinck's, Cornwallis's, Brudenel's, Loudon's, Amhurst's, under Major General Cornwallis; who were all indefatigable in their care during their stay in this little but plentiful island, able to support twenty thousand troops without injuring its inhabitants. Scarce one day passed without exercising the men in the most useful parts of military discipline.

200 gabions and 100 fascines were ordered by Major General Cornwallis as a sample to be forthwith made; tools for that purpose, engineers to give directions, and officers to attend, viz. one Captain, two subalterns and 60 men; all regiments not mustered at the camps of Barham Downs, Dorchester, Hammerham, and Chatham, to prepare their muster-rolls, and to hold themselves in readiness to embark: the number of waggon to be returned to take their baggage to the ships; each regiment to send a return of the strength they are to embark, the arms strictly to be examined, cartridges, each man to have seventy-two rounds on going on board; a return of the number of good flints to be sent to the head quarters; and the General expects all things fit for embarkation, and immediate service; the heavy or useless baggage to be immediately sent away, not more than three women allowed to a company.

But the transports delaying coming according to expectation, an entrenchment was thrown in the front of the line, the better to instruct the soldiers how to make attacks.—And as this was intended to teach the

the younger soldiers; each party was to be chang'd every three hours, that all might take share of the work, and be alike instructed. — A fascine battery was also formed in front of the camp, and a proper guard fixed; fascines of eight foot in length being made for that purpose.

Both officers and soldiers shewed a most sincere and undaunted resolution to exert themselves in the service of their prince and country. — Each battalion seeming ambitious in nothing, but to qualify themselves by exercise and fatigues of the field, the better to enable them to endure any future hardships that the hazards of war might expose them to.

Never were riot or excess more severely punished, nor order, sobriety, and discipline more generously rewarded. Divine service was ordered every day, and regularly performed at the head of each battalion, as often as regimental business would permit; and as a design to reform immorality, Sir John Mordaunt gave strict orders, that every chaplain should attend his corps, or find sufficient deputy, the better to promote piety, and derive the blessing of Heaven on our future achievements.

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Among the acts of generosity to encourage the soldiers to their duty, one must not be omitted in the 20th regiment, Col. K——y, Lieut. Col. W——, and Major B——, with other captains of this regiment, considering as well the narrow subsistence of their subalterns, viz. lieutenants, ensigns and surgeons; as also the great danger of the private men's falling sick with living long on salt meats only—— made a purse of 200 pounds to buy fresh provisions, as well for the officers mess on ship-board, as the private soldiers, to have potatoes, cabbages and onions, to qualify the acrimony of salt provisions; a laudable example to other regiments, that the same corps which is a pattern in discipline, should study the health of their men, as well as form them a model in military evolutions.

Transports to embark these troops were daily expected——but some accidental delays from the Downs to the Nore for the first fortnight, and the winds falling contrary afterwards, prevented their arrival till the 4th of September. The season now in most mens opinion was too far advanced to venture on an expedition, at least far from home;

home; provision laid in for four months only, proved it could not be to the West Indies, and therefore most people imagined it some descent upon the coast of France; which, however judged easy by those who are unexperienced in the art of war, either by sea or land; I flatter myself that these observations will in some measure satisfy the due care of both admirals and generals ——— and that the ——— *impracticability* of making a descent upon so powerful and provident an enemy *successful*, was not owing to any want of courage or conduct in our leaders or commanders; but to a seeming previous ignorance of the coastings of that part of France.

Nor is this any imputation upon a land officer's taking the command, who always both in founding and sailing, depends on the experience of his sea commanders; for I'll venture to affirm, that before the sailing of this fleet, very few men in the kingdom ever drew their attention so as to observe the foundings of the Rade De Pasque; and the thing appears manifest, because since our arrival not one print shop in this opulent city, at most of which I've call'd, have any of these

these sea charts, or were ever asked for them except on Tower Hill, only for the use of the Navy. Pity it is they had not been accurately consulted, before we attempted a voyage of this nature. I am convinced it would have either prevented our setting sail — or at least an inglorious return.

After near six weeks spent on the Isle of Wight, to the great dissatisfaction of both commanders and inferior officers, as giving the enemy time to prepare, and retarding their eager desires to do their country justice : on the fourth of September arrived the transports at Cowes; never was an embarkation conducted with so much order and dispatch, on the 5th five battalions embarked, viz. Buffs, Kingsley's, Wolfe's, Hume's, Hodgson's, in great regularity and high spirits ; to make the embarkation more easy and expeditious, they marched to different keys, and were taken off in men of war and press'd boats properly ranged for that purpose.

On the sixth the other battalions of the second brigade embarked also, and the same night most of the transports fell down to Spithead ; after dropping anchor near Portsmouth for about ten hours, on the wind suddenly

denly turning south, a signal was made for all masters of transports to go on board the Agent ; when a letter was delivered—with rendezvous at Torbay—not to be opened in case of separation, till they came to the westward of Scilly Islands ; at eleven o'clock we weigh'd anchor and sailed directly for St. Helens, but the wind about four *p. m.* turning more southerly, most of the ships cast anchor there, but we being almost the sternmost ship, and the wind suddenly changing to N. W.—A signal was given by the Admiral to weigh, which was immediately done ; we continuing sail now came up with the fleet, leaving the Isle of Wight to leeward that night, so that next morning we could just spy Swan Cliff and Dunnose Point.

Such particular care was taken by the Admiral, before night came on, that sloops, tenders and men of war, were stationed on each side, almost in the form of an octagon, with the Admiral and transports in the center, as crouding under his wings for protection, against any hazard or danger of the enemy.

September the 9th, in the morning blowing a fresh gale to N. W. a signal was given

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to

to tack about, and we all grew apprehensive that we must be forced to return to Spithead the only anchoring place near us, or else if we could not fetch there, to the Downs; but with much difficulty fetch'd in off the highland of St. Alban's; sloops and ships of war again failed round us, both to prevent intelligence and to keep off privateers, who might otherwise surprize ships a-stern, or accidentally distant from the main body of the fleet.

And now being under sail, as if for the westward of Scilly Isles; I shall give a list of ships employed on this expedition, which as appears *by the books of the Admiralty*, was the *finest fleet*, with the heaviest weight of metal and best *found*, that ever sailed from the British nation; the harmony of the land and sea officers, as well as their undoubted *integrity, bravery, and honour*, gave great hopes of retrieving the glory of the British flag, and nothing seemed wanting but numbers of *land forces* to undertake some great and formidable enterprize.

Thus far nothing transpired of our destination, conjecture sometime carry'd us to *Brest*, sometime to *Corfica*, sometime to
Mart inico.

Martinico. Against the first, the unsuccessful attempt of the English in 1694, under Lord Berkley, Lieutenant General Talmarsh, Lord Cutts, with other officers of known courage and conduct, together with the consideration of the Gallick foresight, and their additional strength in fortification since that time, when General Talmarsh (tho' always disliking the enterprize) both suffered disgrace for rashness, and lost his life in the desperate attempt; made us generally despair of any probability of success with our small army, from that quarter.

And as the *Jacobites*, in those days, sent the report to the *French court*, which was then also intended as a *grand secret*; so we made no doubt but their intelligence was received long before our fleet set sail from the Downs; however, had this been as great a secret, as the dark could screen, we must have failed in such attempt, and perhaps hazarded the destruction of a fleet the bulwark of our nation; for the French have 50,000 troops in and near Brest, besides many forts and floating batteries, what therefore could here be done by 10 *battalions* tho' of the bravest men upon earth.

Corfica next was our conjecture, but provision laid in for four months only, and that Island laying too far up the Mediterranean to be of any considerable benefit to our trade, made us scarce think it an object worthy so *expensive* an embarkation; besides the French have many battalions on that Island, so that unless we could certainly have been joined by a great number of the inhabitants, we must there also have failed of success.

Martinico we could all eagerly wish for, but the distance with so small provision, and hazarding the flower of our troops so far abroad, and our ships being all unsheathed, as the worms in that climate would have ever after rendered them unfit for service, this therefore could not bear even a plausible appearance.

Thus while we were tossed about in the ocean, were our thoughts and judgments on the rack to find out this grand political arcanum. But as the list of ships already made publick have been deficient, I shall here set them down at large, with the number of infantry, light horse, &c.

Ships

Ships of the Line.

		<i>Guns.</i>
Royal George	————	112
Namur	————	90
Neptune, Admiral Knowles, red division		90
Ramilies, Admiral Hawke, blue division		90
Magnanime	————	80
Barfleur	————	80
Princess Amelia, Admiral Broderick, white division	————	80
Royal William	————	84
Torbay	———— ————	74
Burford	— ————	74
Dublin	— ————	74
Dunkirk	———— ————	60
Amelia	— ————	60
Alcide	———— ————	64
Hercules	— ————	60
Achilles	———— ————	60
Essex	— ————	64
Jason employed as a transport to the Buffs	— ————	40

Fri.

*Frigates, Bomb Ketches, Tenders, Fire-
ships, &c.*

Fire Drake

Infernal

Plato

Hunter Cutter.

Bomb Tender.

Beaver.

Chesterfield man of war, to repeat signals.

Postillion.

Porcupine.

Canterbury Buss.

Coventry.

Thetis, Hospital Ship.

Southampton, *who on taking a prize, was
forced to return to Plymouth.*

Transports 55, contracted for, from August 20 1757, to January 20 1758, with 500 fathom of cable to each transport; making 15,000 ton at thirteen shillings per ton each month; 100 ton of gun powder in the artillery; 1100 ton to each regiment; the transports had contracted not to go to America, East Indies, or coast of Africa; the government to pay for all captures of ships taken
by

by the enemy, wreck'd, by stress of weather,
&c. till January 20.

Infantry.

Ten battalions, 700 each compleat 7000
Two battalions of marines, viz. Effing-

ham's and Stewart's	—	1400
One troop of light horse	—	60

And as persons, unacquainted with sea affairs, may have very imperfect ideas of the weight and difficulty of conducting so large a fleet, especially in so hazardous a part as the channel, and the bay of Biscay: those who would gain a more distinct information, I would refer to the orders, rules and signals, which are printed by the Admiralty, and delivered to every ship on such important embarkations.

Among the dreadful hazards of winds, rocks and waves, in this boisterous element, nothing gives a more feeling demonstration of the difficulty of navigating a large fleet, than the hourly peril of falling foul upon one another, a severe instance we like to have experienced this day, being the ninth of September,

tember, when by the interposition of a certain man of war falling between us and another transport, we were in the utmost danger of being sent to the bottom; this man of war hail'd us to get out of his way, which was readily complied with, by our navigating captain at the helm, but no sooner had his sails opened the prospect, but a transport, a head of this man of war, presented herself with her broadside to the head of our vessel, which, tho' sails were back'd, and all other means used, yet as she was in full sail, could not be prevented, but for us to run full on his broadside; luckily for him his Greenland boat was lashed to that side on which we fell; which being crushed to pieces, took off great part of the weight of our vessel, otherwise we must have bulged in his side, split our own ship, and inevitably sunk them both.

The hurry and confusion in both crews was inexpressible, some stunned with fear stood stupid, expecting every minute to be committed to the waves, others calling out for boats to take us into the adjoining ships, others swearing at the sailors; the soldiers however did great service, for tho' our bowsprit

sprit was closely entangled in their sails, and each ship impetuously bolting up by a reciprocal impulse, as if mechanically longing to devour one another; they catch'd up with a rare presence of mind, some long poles and handspokes, which darting with all force against the opposite ship, stem'd off their fury, and we soon got disentagled, tho' not without losing our bowsprit, and some of our foresails; — I can't help observing, what both crews can testify, that the wind blew very hard when first they met, but a very gentle breeze succeeded for half an hour, in which time we got entirely clear.

Nor was this the effect of imagination, but visible to those in the greatest hurry, as well as others who stood as idle spectators, for which we may thank providence, for preserving us from the jaws of the deep. I must also remark, that though the man of war was the occasion of the accident, that might have proved fatal to us both; yet he sailed away as unconcerned as if nothing had happened, though he afterwards said, he thought one or both must be sunk, or so damaged as not to be able to get to England, yet neither

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did

did he fend out his boat, or offer the least assistance; so little regard was had to the lives of three hundred souls in his Majesty's service.

Next morning being September 10th, we repaired our sails and rigging, and made the best of our way; being, according to Hadley's quadrant, lat. $50^{\circ} 1'$, land out of sight, at three o'clock, *p. m.* being about two leagues astern of the fleet. The Coventry man of war was dispatched down to us, who spoke to our Captain to hasten up to the fleet; who also hailed a Dutch ship and some other transports astern of us; about five a cutter came down and hailed in a passionate manner our navigating Captain; asking him the reason why he was so much astern, was answered, we make all the sail we can, no time is lost; at six o'clock, another man of war came down to us, and said, *The Admiral is very angry you are so much astern*; this evening the whole fleet lay to, being near the Caskets, waiting till we and other transports came up with them.

11th of September, off Plymouth, almost in the center of the fleet, near Adm. Knowles, in the Neptune, who commanded the red
divi-

division, another man of war coming astern, called to us to get out of the way; seven o'clock, very near, Admiral Hawke, with six cutters or tenders about him, wind N. W. our ship making west; ten o'clock sailed by the fireship Pluto; twelve o'clock, lat. $49^{\circ} 56'$ *per* Davis's quadrant, the Ramilies alongside, so deep a calm now, being off Edistone light house, and towards the coast of France, that forty-five boats had in tow a man of war who was going to speak with a ship in Sight, having two cutters or tenders with her. The laying to these few hours was undoubtedly well judged, to try how the wind would settle, before we entered into the Bay, and also to have a little moon, and amuse the French scouts, who thereby might be kept in suspense whether we designed for Brest, Orient, or Rochefort, as also to know what the Southampton had done, who was dispatched off from the fleet in pursuit as above; and would it not been culpable to sail away from him with the whole, before we knew the event of the action?

September 12th, six o'clock, wind N. E. still lay by, and the Admiral's signal ordered

no ship to go a head of him. Still bearing up to land, wind fair.

September 13th, a fresh gale of wind to S. S. E. passed Lizard point about four o'clock, *a. m.* Another transport came foul upon us, broke our boat, lashed to the leeward side, but did us no farther damage; lat. $49^{\circ} 10'$ alongside of Admiral Broderick, flag white.

The whole fleet now sailing large, stretching as far as sight could discern, made a most gallant appearance on the ocean, the *superbness* of the men of war, with their little smacks, tenders, and cutters around, waiting orders; the terror of the bomb-ketches, frigates, and fireships, the studious observance of the transports to their Admiral's signals and motions, just entering the turbulent Bay of Biscay, never before witness of so fine a fleet at this season, struck the mind with a solemn reverence to the Almighty Ruler of all events, which cou'd not be equally felt by any mind, but whose eyes added a sympathizing sensation of the horrors of war, and God's wonders in the deep.

What yet added to its magnificence, was at this very hour Captain Gilchrist in the
South-

Southampton, came up again to us, his sails and rigging much shattered, followed by a French prize, English jack hoisted above the French colours red; this French frigate of 26 guns and 200 picked men, being a prime sailor, was sent out to watch the motion of our fleet; but falling in the calm, and not having equal number of boats to tow her, the Southampton came up with her, who at first made a feint of sheering off; Captain Gilchrist was at breakfast, and coolly ordered his men to breakfast also, making off, gave him time to prepare, and the Frenchman crowding all his sail, eagerly pursued; when the Southampton laying to, to receive him; never was there a more resolute engagement for twenty minutes, the officers of the French were all killed, two of them by the same shot of a blunderbuss, by Captain Gilchrist's own hand; the men fought each other with handspokes; and when the French had struck, what remained were so able seamen, that they derided the mean appearance of ours, though their conquerors. The Southampton received so much damage in this action, that she was obliged to return to England to repair. This is the
second

second exploit this gallant officer has signalized his bravery and conduct, within this two months, for his Majesty's service, and the honour of his country.

About four, *p. m.* the Admiral hoisted his white flag, and gave the signal of one gun, which was answered by another man of war, who bore down to him from leeward, either on his return from looking after the Southampton, or to inform the Admiral of the seas to windward. This evening also sailed by the Burford, Captain Young, who seeing it would be difficult for us to put out of his road, freed us from all apprehension, by altering his own course, shewing the humane and good man, by steering between two transports, least any accident should thereby befall them; a rare instance which I wish might become exemplary, especially when consistent with the honour of the flag. Wind N. E. a fresh gale five knots *per* hour.

September 14th. A thick fog and dead calm, the Admiral kept firing guns every hour, to let the fleet know his station; other ships also beat drums, rung bells, or made other noises to prevent accidents of running foul: ten o'clock in great danger of falling
foul

soul on the Ramillies, the weight of which ship must inevitably have sunk us.

A fog also in a great fleet, to which this part of the Bay is very subject, is as well disagreeable as terrible, was it not generally as providence has ordered the air to be still, which is the natural cause of a fog, viz. the currency of the air being stopped from carrying off the vapours exhaled by the sun, 'twon'd be next to impossible to guide a number of ships in company with one another, when no observation can be taken of the meridian; but under apprehension of every hour falling upon rocks, vessels, the enemy's coast, steering a wrong course, or be separated with eyes open, yet not able to see. We supposed ourselves not far from Ushant point, but not certain; but luckily hailing one of Adm. Hawke's cutters; we asked what course he steered, who answered, S.W. by W. Thus we steered, and acquainted all ships we heard near us, which prevented many separations; signals of guns, &c. fired all this day and night around us.

September 15th. The fog a little cleared up, close in with the fleet, and near the Admiral, the ringing of whose bells, and whistling

tling of the boatswains, we could plainly hear; ten o'clock a signal from the Admiral to bring to. — Here it may be noted, that this day the first orders for landing were issued out, which in so large a fleet, cou'd not be done without much time, especially as the weather was yet very hazy; had it been later on the day, the expected return of the fog towards evening would have rendered it impossible for the agents to disperse to the several commanders, or adjutants to their separate corps these orders, and no time so proper, especially as both Admiral Broderick and Knowles had been separated by the fog. Lat. 48° one o'clock, a signal for all Captains of men of war to go aboard the Admiral; two o'clock Admiral Knowles and Broderick, with twelve ships of their divisions, joined us, who in the preceding night had steered westward, and thereby lost sight of the rest of the fleet. Very hazy, — a man of war's boat hail'd us to know of the William and Mary, on board which ship was the Captain of the train, Mr. Yorke. A cutter also had in tow two men of war's boats, with two adjutants on board, who could not find their own ships till eleven. Very hazy

zy weather, yet no signals from the Admiral was heard by us, which made us not know what course to steer, fearing to lay too near the French coast.

September the 16th, still hazy morning, half an hour past five o'clock a signal of ten guns from Admiral Hawke, answered by Admiral K — and B — ; at six a signal of one gun. — Cleared up a little, all the fleet around us steering S. S. W. the lieutenants of men of war ordered on board, and the Agent's signal, ordered all masters of transports on board him: this hour (eleven o'clock) the Royal William and Coventry men of war failed by us, we hardly kept clear of them, they crossing our course, going off in pursuit of a French man of war, who probably, fell in with our fleet in the thick fog, and took the first opportunity after he perceived his mistake, to sneak off if possible undiscovered ; so that it was a mark rather of a bad look out in the Frenchman, but not so of our fleet, when for forty eight hours, we could not see our own bowsprit. Latitude $47^{\circ} 41'$, our land officer went to receive the *general orders* from his commander, which as they are already in every paper, I think it

unnecessary here to insert them; he then also brought with him, special orders for his regiment; which as they contain in British style, a Grecian spirit, I hope the liberty of inserting them without leave will be excused.

Regimental orders to the ——— regiment.

“ The major is so convinced of the zeal of
 “ the captains, that he knows many re-
 “ peated orders on the present occasion unne-
 “ cessary.

“ It may not be, however, improper to ex-
 “ plain to the soldiers, the fatal consequences
 “ of straying ever so little in quest of plunder;
 “ it is next to a certainty they will fall igno-
 “ bly by the hands of the country people,
 “ or if they should escape, they may depend
 “ upon suffering death immediately, as diso-
 “ beyers of military orders.

“ The soldiers of the ——— regiment,
 “ cannot be ignorant of the high reputation
 “ they have acquired in peace, for obedience,
 “ attention and expertness in arms, and con-
 “ sequently they must be sensible, how great
 “ things the captain general and all the
 mi-

“ military part of the nation expect from
“ them.

“ The major takes the liberty to assure
“ them, that they are able to fight any bat-
“ talion upon earth ; and he is answerable
“ that it will not be a combat of five mi-
“ nutes, between this battalion and the best
“ in France — whether the affair is decided
“ by fire or bayonet, which last method
“ when practicable, is always to be pre-
“ ferred.

“ As the soldiers are to take but one
“ change of linnen a-shore with them, it
“ will be proper they shift themselves be-
“ fore they disembark.

“ The soldiers to carry grogram in their
“ canteens, in proportion of three waters
“ to one brandy; this they are not to drink,
“ till they have absolute necessity, as it is
“ possible the wells and springs may be poi-
“ soned by the enemy : the men are there-
“ fore to be cautioned not to drink water till
“ they are acquainted it is safe. One tent
“ and two blankets to be packed together,
“ two men without any knapsacks, of the eight
“ in a tent, their things are to be carried by
“ their comrades”.

This morning also the colonel of the same regiment (a brave and experienced officer) gave a sensible and pathetick exhortation to his soldiers.

“ We are now going, my lads, to engage
 “ with an enemy, which though not equal
 “ in valour, yet artful and subtle; what they
 “ cannot execute by force, will endeavour to
 “ effect by stratagem and craft. You have
 “ been excellently forewarn’d by your major,
 “ against the fatal consequences of straying
 “ from camp, and let me remind you, that I
 “ have known and seen the French use the
 “ artifice of strewing bottles of their wine,
 “ nay whole casks often poisoned, to entice
 “ and tempt our soldiery to intoxicate them-
 “ selves, when they despaired of repel-
 “ ling the British prowess by any other me-
 “ thod.

“ I don’t doubt the gallant behaviour of
 “ my regiment, which has so often signalized
 “ itself on emergent occasions, being confi-
 “ dent you will all behave like men and sol-
 “ diers; but let me redouble the caution,
 “ beware of this snare in your marches or
 “ counter-marches; and as drunkenness is the
 “ bane of all order and discipline in an army,
 so

“ so now in particular, might it be one main
 “ obstacle to our glory and success in this
 “ momentary expedition ; I hope therefore
 “ for your own sakes, for the honour of your
 “ King and country, and me in particular,
 “ you will avoid all appearance of being se-
 “ duced from your duty, either by this, the
 “ hopes of plunder, or any other temptation
 “ that may be thrown in your way to invei-
 “ gle you. You are led on by officers of
 “ known courage and fidelity, who love you
 “ well, who have never failed rewarding the
 “ good, or discountenancing the bad, let me
 “ rest assured therefore that you will do me
 “ credit as your commander, by a vigorous ex-
 “ ecution and resolute obedience to our com-
 “ mands. Above all let me earnestly ex-
 “ hort you to a compact union, and steady
 “ connexion, in bravely exerting your power
 “ with the bayonet in the time of attack ;
 “ not to swerve from rank, nor wander at
 “ any time from camp in hopes of plunder,
 “ by which, and the Divine assistance, we
 “ shall be able to vindicate a good cause, a-
 “ gainst so perfidious and treacherous an ene-
 “ my ; and return home with the applause of
 “ our own hearts, having done all in our
 “ power

“ power for the service of our good and gra-
 “ cious sovereign, and our dear and native
 “ country, so much dreaded, envied and co-
 “ veted, by that very enemy you are now
 “ going to engage.

Seventeenth a calm morning, the fleet altogether, steering E. by S. Lat. $47^{\circ} 3$. by Davis's quadrant, and $47^{\circ} 0$. by Hadley's, wind S.

We now judged the descent intended upon Rochfort and Rochelle, in order to destroy the king's dock at the first, and hurt their trade by distressing the last. Which naturally led us into various reflections and observations on those parts, as far as our sea charts on board, and our knowledge could lead. And being now in the center of that mountainous boisterous bay of Biscay, should a strong west, or north west wind happen to take us, this *glorious fleet* would be in the utmost danger of being dashed to pieces on the French coast, which would be a loss *irreparable* to the nation; therefore the very ensuring an embarkation, where men, ships, provision, ammunition, hospital stores, &c. &c. could not be accounted of less value than ten millions, besides the fate of England
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if such disaster should befall us, made us debate whether Rochefort and Rochelle were objects worthy the expence and hazard incurred in so dangerous a part of the ocean; many masters of transports, and seafaring men, declaring, that had they known the voyage was into the Bay, no consideration should have prevailed with them to have contracted with the government as transports.

With strict attention, we next fell to examine the best sea-charts, viz. Collins's, Halley's, and the charts of Paris, and were disagreeably surprized to see them all agree, that the soundings up the river to Rochefort, not exceed at ebb two fathom, in some parts one and a half, water, we thence concluded with reason, that the three deckers could be of no manner of service, nor could the bombketches or fireships be supposed to tide it up a rapid and strait river, lined with forts, curvings, and other annoyances, where if but one ship was sunk, either by the fire of the forts, or by other accident, she would retard the rest from moving up or down; eighteen foot water, or three fathom, is the least any ship with weight of metal, &c. can venture

ture up an enemy's river. — To what purpose then were these ships of the line sent, where no naval force to engage on the seas could be expected, they surely were an incumbrance, where they could not assist in any attack.

As for Rochelle, we found it guarded with a sand at ebb — dry — so that even a bomb-ketch could not approach near enough to bombard it; what therefore could we now expect, when we with reason apprehended, that no ship of force could cover — that *nerve of the army*, the infantry's landing, nor batter forts, either inaccessible, or at best up a strait rapid river, where they must at half ebb lay broadside, or on ground, at the mercy of the enemy's fire.

September 19th, a rough sea and great swell in the middle of the fleet, sailing three knots *per* hour, E. by south, wind N. W. by N. lat. 46 25', at eight this eve, the Admiral gave a signal of eight guns, and the whole fleet brought too all that night, though a fair wind; the Royal William and Torbay, who sailed off in pursuit of the French 60 gun ship up the river to Bourdeaux — narrowly escaping the sands, gave out the chase; they

they had on board the only pilot who knew this coast, which might occasion our laying too, but greatly retarded our coming to anchor in the Rade De Pasque.

20th—— seven o'clock, a league a-stern of the fleet, wind N. E. a fresh gale, which rendered it difficult to fetch Oleron; lat. 46 7', Oleron four leagues south—at four *p. m.* espied land a head, E. S. E. seven leagues, eight at night we saw a light house, and guns fire from the French coast; 225 between flash and report. It being a known maxim in Pneumatics respecting the motion of light and sound, that sound moves (the air being equal) about one mile in the time a person may count moderately 25—on water—but less on land; as many objects interpose on the surface of the earth, to retard the undulation of the air——moving to the ear in an horizontal line; so that from this observation, we judged ourselves about three leagues from Oleron.

September 21, in sight of land, the tower or light house, on the north point of Oleron island, about two leagues distant, a cutter hailed us not to go ahead of the Admiral's ship. Seven o'clock wind N. and by E. Admiral Knowles, who was to command the

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first division in full sail, making toward land; eleven, a gun fired by Adm. Hawke, answered by Admiral K——s, another signal to tack, about half past eleven, three guns fired by Admiral Hawke, and the bloody flag, or flag of defiance hoisted on the foretopmast-head; twelve, the flag suddenly taken down, being hoisted by the Captain without knowledge of the Admiral, who was said to express great resentment at this being done without orders. Admiral Knowles coming up as if to speak with Admiral Hawke, both bearing down to each other; then Admiral Knowles seemed to wear as if going into the road— But at two o'clock we shortened sail, according to Admiral Hawke, who was nothing but topsails, and four stay sails close in wind—and shortly after lay too, Ad. K. making full sail, all the land officers, as by order of 15th, the soldiers provision, arms, and ammunition, being put up ready, and expecting to land that night, at eight o'clock we were all in full sail going in between Rhee and Oleron; but Adm. K. firing a gun, and making a tack, we all came to anchor about seven, *p. m.* near the isle of Rhee,
wind

wind N. E.

22d, at seven o'clock in the morning, Adm. K. failed by, hammocks up, sails crouded, ready to engage, at eight we all weighed anchor, and failed between the islands of Rhee and Oleron, into a fine bay, called in the charts *Rade De Pasque*; expecting now, that having the day before us, the first division would have cleared all obstacles, and nothing wou'd have retarded our attempt of landing that night at farthest; but no sooner were come into the center of the road, which is so fine a bay, as 500 ships might safely ride, than at nine, *a. m.* a signal was given to cast anchor, we founded, and found 23 fathom water, agreeable to the charts before cited, where a sinus from different currents meeting like a vortex, rendered our station the deepest water in this spacious harbour. We were about two leagues from Rochelle, which appeared by the churches, monasteries, and convents, a large and populous city, and were within sight of the sand dry at ebb, which guards it from a sudden surprise of being bombarded by sea. All the rest of the day and night we remained at anchor, not a little anxious at this delay.

23d, a calm morning, still at anchor in sight of the Isle D'Aix, where a fort, supposed a very strong one, at the mouth of the river leading up to Rochefort; must be in our possession before any farther progress could be made; we could see the French colours hoisted on the governor's house or citadel, and many preparations for our reception; many boats we could see rowing men into the garrison from the coast.

Ten o'clock Adm. K—— in the Neptune 90 guns, and his whole division, viz. Magnanime 74, Barfleur 80, America 64, Alcide 74, Burford 74, Royal William 90, weighed and made full sail toward the front of the garrison. Captain Howe led on the starboard tack, and the America the larboard. Many guns fired from the Isle of Oleron, at two of our small vessels seeming to reconnoitre that shore.

Twelve o'clock A. H. weighed anchor, as if going down to the fort; it was reported that a — shewing some backwardness of bearing down, the Admiral ordered his Captain to weigh, he'd go and lay before it himself, which on seeing the other sailed on with his division, but never came within gun-shot of
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the fort, as was visible to all the fleet, and **Adm. H.** cast anchor again.

Half an hour past twelve, the first gun fired from the garrison at our ships, a small battery also at the west corner of the island fired at the *Jason*, who had the regiment of Buffs in boats ready to land, but we cou'd see the balls fall short of them; — vast crouds of people appear on the French coasts.

The line of battle ships kept under sail, and the *Jason* tack'd about and made up to them, not being able to land her men at the intended corner, both for the shallowness of the water, and also the fierce fire of the battery.

One o'clock the *Magnanime* stood directly in to the fort, and began a most heavy fire, like a continual thunder, rendering the very ship to appear as one cloud of smoke. The battery also fired very briskly, and the *Barfleur* at a great distance, fired some few guns. Before the attack began, Captain Howe received the fire of the garrison with great intrepidity, ordered all his men to lay down upon the decks, turn'd all his live cattle, fowls, and unnecessaries over board; himself only with his speaking trumpet in hand, the pilot and
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the man at the helm appearing upon deck, till he came within sixty yards of the bastions of the garrison, when he began so furious a fire, that the Monfieurs said something more than man must be on board that ship; the men in the garrison were so much terrified, that most of them clapped themselves down under the works of the garrison, and in the ditches, nor could be prevailed on to stand to their guns, which obliged the governor to strike the colours, and was no sooner done, than they all jumped up, taking snuff, dancing, and rejoicing, as if they had gained a victory.

The garrison ceasing fire, some sailors and mariners first landed, and the Jason with the battalion of the Buffs in boats, took possession of the island. There being only two marines and one sailor killed on board the *Magnanime*, and one man killed in the garrison, by a ball glancing off obliquely on his breast, where it remained fixed without force to penetrate through his body.

The governor on our taking possession, surprised us with saying to this effect, “ Messieurs, — we expected e’re now; we had an account of your sailing from St. Helen’s the 7th,

7th, which made us remove all our valuable effects, so that you will now find but a poor island." The principal engineer met with a complement, that he'd now be happy, *you've got your friends about you.*

This fort, had it been compleated according to old Vauban's plan of military architecture, laid out and almost finished — might have given us great trouble. The parapets were raised to their proper height, but embrasures were not yet fix'd, else perhaps the French for — pusillanimity would not have been blam'd; in the fort were five hundred soldiers and two hundred sailors, yet no discharge of musquetry; which as the *Magnanime* was so near, might have greatly annoyed our marines on board; in the garrison were found twenty guns, eighteen pounders, eight mortars, but few bombs were thrown, all which were either taken away or rendered useless. A great quantity of powder, ball, and ammunition in the magazine,

24th, still at anchor, wind contrary from going up the river to Rochefort: Nine o'clock a man of war's boat ordered us to weigh, and make between the Ramillies and
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Rochelle; cast anchor again at one, *a council of war per signal*, on board the *Ramil- lies*. This day it was reported through the fleet, that the French had certainly sixteen battalions of five hundred each, with thirty thousand of well disciplined militia, about Rochefort and Rochelle; and that the K. of France's household troops were coming down to Rochefort.

25th, all the transports ordered to sail to the N. E. end of the Isle of D'Aix, and this day we took boats to see the island and its fortifications; we found the rocks extend so far into the sea, that our boat struck two hundred yards from shore, which made it impossible for the *Jason* to sail near that corner. The instant we landed, the battalion of the Buffs were marching out of the barracks and garrison, to return aboard the transports.

The Island is not above one mile long, and about half a mile diameter, almost in an oval form, the soil, barren, sandy, and gravelly, and yet one continued vineyard; we went into one of about six acres, and were surprized to find their vines not higher than our gooseberry bushes in England. At first we thought it a young unbearing plantation; but going farther,

farther, we found great quantity of grapes of so delicious a flavour, as made us satisfied, we had never tasted a good grape before; they are planted not much unlike our hops in England, only thus differing, instead of throwing up earth, they hollow a cavity round each stem; raising up sand and gravel on each side, as well for the fendrils to rest upon in windy weather, as to make the rays of the sun more powerful reflected, and also to receive the falling rains in a basin; the old stems as big as a man's head, are open and near cut even with the surface of the earth; no luxuriant branches appear, which makes me imagine the way of pruning their vines adds to the fertility of their vintage, seeming at proper seasons to lop off all new-bearing branches to the very stem, to prevent bleeding, or that the juice may be re-sorb'd by the mother root; whereas we hold it dangerous to lop off the new luxuriant branches, they on the contrary seem to do it as being like suckers, impoverishing and hindering the fruit to come to maturity and perfection. And though this island is greatly exposed to the cold sea breezes, yet seeing such a fertility in each vineyard, I could not

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but imagine that many warm exposures in England properly cultivated, might produce as fine grapes, tho' the experiments that have been already made have scarce answered the expectation.

From the vineyards we went into the town, where the streets were strewed with wooden shoes, some new, some old, some half scoop'd out, and a face of poverty appeared every where, scarce one inhabitant was to be seen, the greatest part having fled to the continent on sight of our formidable fleet; and though the strictest orders were given both by General and Admiral, against molesting the properties of the inhabitants, yet such is the rapaciousness of a conquering army, where wine was plentiful, that 'twou'd given a credit to our discipline, had there been no occasion of complaint.

Thence we went into the barracks, and offices adjoining to the garrison, where I met with one of the sacerdotal order, in his canonical habit, not unlike our batchelors of arts gowns, a grey venerable old man; on being introduced, I asked him, *Entendez vous Anglois?* he answered, — *oui, Monsieur*; and asked me

me in English to walk into his house, which I did, and found it as dirty an habitation as I had ever seen; a large company were drinking in his room, but on his coming in they all got up and walked out; and on his saying to his servant, *Firmer la port*, we were left together; no sooner were we seated, but with great officiousness, a dirty cloth was laid on the table, and on his forgetting to speak English, asked me, *Voulez vous manger une pen?* I answered, *Si vous plais, Monsieur?* on which was set on very fine bread, but the wretchedest butter Englishmen ever tasted; on drinking a glass of Frontiniack, I said, *I hoped he'd received no ill usage*, to which he answered, *Not the least ill usage, but all the civility, and even more than I could have expected in my situation*; which obliges me to make this remark, that though it has been reported since our return, that he had met with great abuse from our soldiers, yet as the regiment of Buffs, the instant I was with him were taking boat again, if he sustained any injury afterwards, it must be imputed to the sailors or miners at work to blow up the fort, and not to the fault of any of the land soldiers.

There were then three parties of miners at work; but they being too few, more were ordered from each regiment, who in parties continued working till the 30th, when the fortification, governor's house, and barracks, were at several explosions blown up, and the island quitted. Four men, viz. two sailors, and two soldiers of Lord Bentinck's regiment being blown up, and one serjeant having both his thighs broke, by a stone descending on him.

I can't pass over the appearance and mein of those I saw on the island and garrison, making some allowance for their dejection of spirit, being so soon subject to the will of conquerors. I never saw in any part of England a more squalid look, and more boorish demeanor. Tho' we in general reckon the ordinary people in France exceed ours in civility, and native politeness and address, which I take to be a prejudiced opinion. The only cattle I saw were six or seven very bad horses belonging to the governor, and a few horned cattle, principally for his use; some Indian wheat was also brought from thence by our officers.

Here also were we informed of sixteen battalions and thirty thousand militia, besides the
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invalids and workmen at the dock of Rochefort, all which cou'd in fix hours time be assembled, to oppose our attack; that the ditch was then full of water, and by opening the sluices the country could be laid under water for five miles round. Should our infantry land at Chatelaillon,---a deep morafs and rivulet would retard their march, so that the artillery cou'd not get up without going 20 miles round into the heart of the country; that all men of war built at Rochefort, for want of water, were forced to tide it down the river at spring tides only, without guns or rigging, and be compelled with jury masts or tow, to go round to Brest to take in their guns and rigging, and that but one sixty gun ship had ever been built at Rochefort, but only 40 guns---in general, and that therefore our ships of the line, &c. could be of no use in such an attempt.

These relations coming from suspected persons had no great weight in our judgments, but we still retained expectation, that now this obstacle was removed, our landing would no longer be postponed; the opinion we retained of the skill of our sea commanders, made us rest assured they could not be
guilty

guilty of so great an absurdity, as to bring ships of that force and weight of metal, where they could be of no manner of service; and flush'd with hopes of being in six hours on the French *continent*, we took boat and left the island, carrying a good quantity of fine grapes to regale our messmates aboard; having a strong gale against us, not without some danger of being drown'd, but heartily doused,—about 9 o'clock we got to our ship, though not without much difficulty to find her, our captain having neglected to hang us out a light.

And now we have left the island, let me return a few days longer to my journal aboard. This evening every boat that hailed us, we expected to bring us fresh orders to land, but going, tho' late, to repose, we found ourselves on waking (26 at morning) yet in the same tranquil station, in the Rade de Pasque; the air being very clear, we could now, by the help of glasses, see a long range of tents about one mile off shore, with an encampment of cavalry, as if march'd behind some woods, the advanced guards we could plainly discover on an eminence, which gave us great mortification; reflecting on our de-
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lays and trifling away fix days, when each moment seemed precious in the execution of our project. Cutters and small vessels were sent out all this day, to sound up the river Charente leading to Rochfort, but we could see them return, without advancing within gunshot of the fort La Foura; which standing on an eminence, seemed to us a strong fortification, we counted twelve embrasures pointing to the N. W. of the Rade, and could perceive men move——upon the parapets as seeming to prepare.

This night it was reported the expedition was at an end, but on a sudden orders came “*for the soldiers to hold themselves in readiness, if they should be called upon to land next morning.*”

27th —— still at anchor, wind E. —— twenty more miners out of every regiment, ordered to work on the isled’ Aix fortifications; and forty soldiers with ball, and bayonet fix’d, to keep guard on deck every night, and hail every boat or vessel that passed; if not answering in English after thrice hailing, nor giving the word, to fire in upon them; this caution was taken on a report, that the French intended to send out some galeashes, or small fire-

fireships, in the dark nights, to annoy our fleet at anchor. A signal hung out for *another council of war, on board the Ramillies.*

28th, a return being made of provision of the several transports the day before, an order this morning came from the general, that no water should be allowed to wash the linnen, even for the officers : all this morning two small French doggers, or galeashes, appeared in sight of the fleet, near the fort de Foura—who kept a continual fire on our small cutters, who seemed to be sounding between the French continent and the N. E. corner of the island of Day. At 11 o'clock at night came sudden orders, for all the troops to debark from the transports, on board the boats—and land silently. Ramillies 28th of September 1757, parole St. George—andc.

Which being also in every paper, I think unnecessary to insert.

In obedience to these orders Colonel K——y with Lieutenant Colonel Sir William Boothby, and Major Farquahar, who were to march at the head of the grenadiers, took boat before twelve, tho' about two leagues from shore, and a fresh gale full against

against them, which would have endangered many of the boats loaded with men, so croud-
ed that they could only stand erect; they
were tumbled in the swell till two o'clock,
none coming to conduct them to the place of
rendezvous; at last a cutter came down and
say'd, "*you are ordered to ship again, for that*
the other regiments cannot be ready these
two hours," Colonel K———y say'd "*I*
can hardly believe it; shew me your orders,"
on which was shewn a written order; at
which all the soldiers made a *humming noise*;
and they all went to their respective trans-
ports, the boats remaining still ready.

29th still at anchor, every minute expect-
ing to land; two men of war sailed round the
west side of the Isle D'Aix, as if sounding and
trying to get up the river, but though they
moved very slowly with little sail spread, we
could often perceive them motionless as if on
ground, and about twelve came back to the
ships laying before the fort d'Aix: at two
o'clock, *p. m.* the Agent gave orders for all
masters of transports to follow Admiral H.
on signal, and that no troops disembark
without farther orders. All the ships of Ad-
miral K. division came down from before

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D'Aix

D'Aix into the open road.

30th still at anchor, wind N. E. orders from the Agent for transports to weigh and sail down to the Admiral——the captain of our transport went on board the Agent, and brought a letter not to be opened, but in case of separation; this afternoon the fort of D'Aix in flames, and totally blown up.

September 1st wind N. E. the whole fleet after signal given, weigh'd anchor, and sailed for England, where we arrived the seventh, part of the transports being drove to the Downs by a hard gale—to N. W.

Thus have I accounted for every hour in the voyage, and let me put one short question; if the sea charts are wrong, as some *would insinuate*, why did neither the transports approach shore, nor the ships of war venture up the river; when it could not be expected that the small arms of the soldiery, could blow up docks, or batter forts, without assistance of our naval force.

F I N I S.



